Frequently Asked Questions
Impact of COVID-19 on Medical School Admissions

We understand that navigating medical school admissions during these unprecedented and uncertain times can be very stressful. We are monitoring the situation and will adjust our policies and deadlines accordingly. Please check back regularly as this situation evolves.

1. **My school is offering a pass/fail (or satisfactory/unsatisfactory) grading option due to COVID-19. Will UAB accept a pass or satisfactory grade in place of a letter/numeric grade for required prerequisite coursework?**

   We will accept pass or satisfactory grades during semesters impacted by COVID-19.

   Below are factors to consider in your individual/unique decision:

   - **Applicants applying in 2021:**
     - If you have solid academic and testing performance:
       - A semester (or two) with pass grades instead of letter/numeric grades is not going to impact our decision. Remember we do a holistic review of your application file.
       - Don’t take your foot off the gas pedal! Do your best to learn the material in your current courses to apply to future coursework.
     - If you have struggled academically and have been working to improve grades:
       - Unfortunately, a pass grade will not show us an upward trend in grades. If you are doing well in your coursework, you should opt for a numerical/letter grade.
       - If you haven’t been able to show a positive trend yet, you may need to consider waiting to apply until you can demonstrate readiness. Talk with your academic advisor who can help you with your unique situation. There is no need to rush and apply before you are ready – it is too expensive and stressful!

   - **Applicants applying in 2022 and beyond:**
     - If you still have at least a full year of science coursework to complete before applying:
       - You have time to show your preparation for the rigors of medical school.
       - A single semester (or two) during the pandemic with pass grade(s) will not negatively impact the review of your application.
       - Having said that, you should perform as best you can – as the lessons you learn in science courses are the foundation for later coursework.

2. **My school moved our classes to an online format. Will UAB accept online prerequisite courses?**

   - Yes, we accept online coursework for all prerequisite lecture-based courses.
   - While we normally expect students to take their labs in person, we will make an exception for labs that were transitioned to an online format due to COVID-19.

3. **My spring MCAT test date was cancelled and I will not be able to take it until after the application opens. What does this mean for the competitiveness of my application? Is it possible to have MCAT waived?**

   - Remember that many applicants are in your same situation. A late application in this cycle will likely be the norm as applicants take later MCAT exams. We do not plan to waive the MCAT at this time.
   - The AAMC MCAT administration has reported the intent to ramp up testing opportunities to ensure availability once it is safe to re-open testing centers.

**Updated 4/27/2020**
4. **Will the application dates and deadlines change?**
   - We are updating two deadlines at this time:
     - Early Decision Secondary Application Deadline: August 14 (was August 1).
     - Early Medical School Acceptance Program (EMSAP): October 15 (was August 15)
   - As the situation develops and we learn more about testing sites and availability, the AMCAS dates as well as additional individual school deadlines may change.
   - We (the medical school admissions community) are ready to make appropriate accommodations when we have more information. Hang in there!

5. **I was supposed to shadow/do community service (insert whatever experiences you had planned) for this spring but they were cancelled due to COVID-19. Will this impact my application?**
   - A gap in service, shadowing or other engagement activities during this pandemic will not, by itself, impact your application. If you have been engaging in these experiences throughout your college career, this gap is understandable and of no concern.
   - If you have not yet engaged in significant medically related activities or longitudinal community service, you may not be ready to apply to medical school. We recommend reviewing your unique situation with your pre-health advisor.

6. **My college usually provides a committee letter to professional schools but will only be providing a letter packet due to COVID-19. Will this negatively impact my application?**
   - Absolutely not. We understand the challenges this pandemic is placing on pre-health advisors and committees. We will accept letter packets and individual letters of recommendation in lieu of a committee letter. See our minimum requirements for details.